



UNITED BY HOPE – Part 2

How Do You Hold on to Faith amidst Trials in this World?

If you have a Bible—and I hope you do—let me invite you to open up 1 Peter 1. While you're turning there, I want to mention two things.

One, I'm wearing this Care Team shirt to support our food distribution ministry. I cannot say enough about this massive operation and all the people across our church who are doing so many things. The simple fact is, the more people sign up to serve, the more people in our city hear the gospel and have physical needs met in the middle of COVID. I want to encourage you—individuals, couples, families, groups together—go online and sign up to serve.

The second thing is this book on voting is now out: [Seven Questions Every Christians Should Ask Before You Vote](#). The aim of this book is to foster unity in the church, as we all vote according to biblical convictions. We've also developed a 31-day Prayer Guide for our country, leading up to the election, which will be available starting next Sunday. There is no question that our greatest need during these days in our country is mercy from God. So let's seek Him together with one voice, as we steward our vote and as we work together for the spread of His name in a country that needs what no presidential candidate or party could ever give.

We saw last week that it's the hope of the gospel that brings us together. I want to show you today how hopeful this gospel is. I've been waiting all week long to dive into this text with you. We've got a lot of ground to cover. I want to invite you to read God's Word out loud with me. We're going to read 1 Peter 1:1-12. We are five verses into this challenge to memorize 1 Peter 1, so some of you may be able to recite those first five verses and then just read the rest of them. This is the Word of God; let's say it out loud together:

¹ To those who are elect exiles of the Dispersion in Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia, ² according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, in the sanctification of the Spirit, for obedience to Jesus Christ and for sprinkling with his blood: May grace and peace be multiplied to you.

³ Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! According to his great mercy, he has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, ⁴ to an inheritance that is imperishable, undefiled, and unfading, kept in heaven for you, ⁵ who by God's power are being guarded through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time. ⁶ In this you rejoice, though now for a little while, if necessary, you have been grieved by various trials, ⁷ so that the tested genuineness of your faith—more precious than gold that perishes though it is tested by fire—may be found to result in praise and glory and honor at the revelation of Jesus

Christ. ⁸ Though you have not seen him, you love him. Though you do not now see him, you believe in him and rejoice with joy that is inexpressible and filled with glory, ⁹ obtaining the outcome of your faith, the salvation of your souls.

¹⁰ Concerning this salvation, the prophets who prophesied about the grace that was to be yours searched and inquired carefully, ¹¹ inquiring what person or time the Spirit of Christ in them was indicating when he predicted the sufferings of Christ and the subsequent glories. ¹² It was revealed to them that they were serving not themselves but you, in the things that have now been announced to you through those who preached the good news to you by the Holy Spirit sent from heaven, things into which angels long to look.

Let's pray.

O God, amidst all the tensions and issues in our country, amidst the various trials in our lives, we pray that You would help us understand the wonder of what we just read and what it means for our lives. Speak to us now by Your Holy Spirit we pray, in Jesus' name. Amen.

I want to start today with a confession: faith is a struggle for me. I don't know if that sentence surprises you, discourages you, encourages you, confuses you or disappoints you. After all, I'm a pastor. I've lived with faith in Jesus for close to 40 years in my life. But earlier this week in my time alone with God, I want to confess before you a struggle to believe in a specific way.

Most of you know I have a son on the other side of the world whom we're adopting that I can't get to because of COVID. I've been praying every day, multiple times a day, for six months for God to make a way for me to go to my son—and God hasn't done it yet. One day earlier this week, as I started to pray, the thought crossed my mind, "Why am I even praying?" I just started thinking, "Is my prayer actually going to matter?" I certainly preach that praying matters, but in that moment it sure felt like it didn't.

Then it was a small step from there to begin thinking about other things that are weighing heavy on my heart in life right now. I started to think, "Does it really matter if I pray about those things either?" Before I knew it, my faith was headed in an unhelpful direction. This was just a normal Tuesday morning in my time alone with God. Nothing extreme or tragic had happened. I wasn't avoiding God—I was actually spending time with God—yet I was struggling in my faith.

So faith is a daily struggle for me as a pastor. I'm guessing I'm not alone and that faith is a struggle for many of you, in different ways, amidst different things going on in your lives—your family, your work, when you look around the world on a daily basis—then all the more so when you experience trials.

I've been thinking all week about people in our church family who, over the last couple of weeks, have suddenly lost loved ones due to COVID, some due to suicide, some due to other causes. I think of brothers and sisters I know from our church family who are in the hospital right now with COVID, some who've received cancer diagnoses over the last couple of weeks, some whose marriages are struggling, whose kids are struggling, whose jobs are gone. I could go on and on.

How do you hold on to faith amidst trials in this world?

So here's the question I want to ask today for anyone who struggles with faith: how do you hold on to faith amidst trials in this world? This seems like a really important question to answer for each of us, whether you're struggling now in some way or you find yourself struggling in the future.

Remember a couple weeks ago we talked about Elijah, a hero of the faith in the Bible who got to the point where he didn't even want to live anymore. We said none of us is beyond reaching that point. None of us.

How do you hold on when you get to that moment or day when you find yourself struggling with faith? In order to show you God's answer in His Word to my own heart—and His answer for all of us—I want to start by defining a couple terms based on the passage we just read.

Faith is continuing hope and trust in God.

The first word we need to define is faith. We see it three times in the verses we just read. At the end of verse five we saw, *“by God's power [you] are being guarded through faith for salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.”* Then verse seven says, *“The tested genuineness of your faith...may be found to result in praise and glory and honor.”* Then verse nine talks about *“the outcome of your faith.”*

When we see the word “faith” in this passage, it's not just a generic word for any kind of faith in any thing. In this passage, faith equals continuing hope and trust in God. It's living hope. Not just hope at some point in the past, but an ongoing hope and trust in God. You believe in Him, this passage says. You trust in Him to save your soul. That's what we see here. You believe in Him and trust Him to save your soul.

A side note for those of you who are not yet Christians and who are listening right now: the salvation of your soul is talking about the day when every single person in the world will stand before God to give an account for our lives on this earth. Each of us will stand before God one day as sinners, as people who have turned from God's ways to our own ways. We all deserve judgment before God for our sin—every one of us, from the best to the worst of us. The good news of the Bible is that God loves us and has sent Jesus to pay the price for our sins. Jesus died on the cross for our sins, so that anyone who trusts in Him will be saved from our sins.

So I want to urge you today, if you haven't already, to put your hope and trust in God and His grace toward you in Jesus. Contact us if you have any doubts or questions about that day when you're going to stand before God. I want you to leave today with trust in Jesus and hope in your heart as you anticipate that day.

I want each of us to live with continuing hope and trust in God. So one more note before continuing here. We could go all through the Bible and talk about people whose faith failed at different

points. Peter, who's writing this book, is at the top of that list. Before Jesus went to the cross, remember what He told Peter in Luke 22:31-34?

"Simon, Simon, behold, Satan demanded to have you, that he might sift you like wheat, but I have prayed for you that your faith may not fail. And when you have turned again, strengthen your brothers." Peter said to him, "Lord, I am ready to go with you both to prison and to death." Jesus said, "I tell you, Peter, the rooster will not crow this day, until you deny three times that you know me."

That's exactly what Peter did right after this; he denied Jesus three times. So did his faith fail? Yes, in that moment, just like our faith in so many moments is prone to fail. It's just like I described in my life this past week. But did faith fail ultimately? That's what Peter is after here when he's writing about continuing hope and trust in God. He's writing to Christians in the first century who are going through trials, he's encouraging them to hold on to faith, hold on to hope and trust in God, in the middle of trials.

Trials are temptations to lose faith.

This leads to the second definition: trials are temptations to lose faith. Peter references trials at the end of 1 Peter 1:6, then twice after that he uses the word "testing." Look at verses six and seven: "...*you have been grieved by various trials, so that the tested genuineness of your faith...is tested by fire...*" I want you to see the way Peter describes these trials, these testings of our faith, these temptations to lose faith.

He says they are varied: "*You have been grieved by various trials.*" When you think about trials in your life, think about the different temptations to lose faith. It could be just a passing moment when you're tempted to sin. Trials could be small things that pile up when you're tempted to lose faith in a moment. Or they could be large, major things when you're tempted to lose faith altogether. After all, the root of sin is a lack of faith, a lack of trust that God's way is best and right.

The Bible says these trials are often grievous, hard, painful and sorrowful. But the Bible also says they're temporary — "*...for a little while.*" We'll come back to that in a minute. One other thing the Bible says about trials is that they are purposeful. Look at the phrase in verse six: "*...if necessary...*" That's interesting. What does that mean? Why would trials be necessary? The answer verse seven gives us begins with "*so that...*" That's a purpose clause. There's purpose in the trial: "*So that the tested genuineness of your faith...may be found to result in praise and glory and honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ.*" I want to spend the rest of our time unpacking what that means, but at this point I just want you to see something really important.

God intends trials to strengthen our faith.

When you think about the purpose of trials, this passage is saying that God intends every type of trial to strengthen your faith. When it said in verse seven, "*...that the tested genuineness of your faith...may be found to result in praise and glory and honor...*" ask is that a good thing? The answer is yes,

that's a really good thing. It's an infinitely good thing. As I'm going to show you, there's nothing better than that which is what God intends trials to lead to. That's the result of trials for those who hope and trust in God. So God intends every type of trial—small, big, light, heavy, all of them—to strengthen your faith.

I want you to see the contrast here, because God is not the only one Who has an intent in our trials. We'll see later in 1 Peter 5 that the devil is on the prowl like a roaring lion seeking to devour. Do you know what he wants to devour? He wants to devour your faith. You need to know this. God intends every type of trial to strengthen your faith, but Satan intends every type of trial to destroy your faith. Every single day Satan aims to destroy your faith. Every day. When you walk through trials and temptations, Satan wants you to lose your faith.

He wants me to think prayer doesn't matter, that God doesn't care about me or what I'm asking for or about my son. God's not even listening. That's what Satan wants me to think. The devil wants us to think God doesn't care about what we're going through. "If God is good, He wouldn't be letting this or that happen. If God is powerful, He would have stopped this or that. If God is loving, He would do something." Satan wants to devour our faith in a world where we're surrounded by trials and temptations to lose faith.

Back to our question then. How do you hold on to faith in the middle of trials in this world? Practically, what do you do? In order to show you the answer the Bible is giving us here, I want to put a picture in your mind. I have a rope here and I want you to picture this small blue part as your life in this world, from start to finish, from the moment you're born to the moment you die. In the middle, there are all sorts of varied trials—some small, some big, some that last for a moment, some that last for months or years or maybe even decades. They're all represented here, in this time between your birth and your death. This is your life in this world.

The question we're asking today is how do you hold on to faith here amidst trials in this world? The answer I want to show you from 1 Peter 1—and in the illustration of this rope—is that you hold on to faith here by looking back, by looking forward and by looking up. Follow this with me.



Hold on to faith by looking back.

In the middle of trials, how do you hold on to faith? You look back in three ways. First, look back at the God Who called your name before the world even began. We saw this last week. Christian, your story didn't start here, at your birth. It didn't start there, at the beginning of this blue tape. Your story started a long time before this. I'm going to walk this direction and show you this rope goes all the way to the other side of this stage; it keeps going backstage, then out the door, across the street, across the city,

around the world, around again and again and again, then around the universe. It goes on forever. I want you to get the whole picture that this rope stands for eternity past, going on forever in this direction.

We saw last week in 1 Peter 1:2 that before the foundation of the world, God foreknew you. He knew you before a star was even set in the sky. Before earth was even created, God foreknew you. According to verse three, God chose you “*according to his great mercy*” and has “*caused us to be born again to a living hope.*” From eternity past, God set His affection on you. He chose to love you, save you from your sin and adopt you into His family.

When you think about the point in your life when you were born again, when you put your trust and hope in Jesus for the first time—whether that was years ago or days ago; maybe for some of you it might be today—whenever that point was, realize that’s not where the story started. The story started millions of years before that, in eternity past, when God chose to love you and adopt you into His family.

This picture of adoption is so real to me. Right now, there is a child on the other side of the world without a family or a home. He has no idea there’s a family and a home praying for him every single day, multiple times a day; a family who loves him and can’t wait to shower him with love.

This is you before God. Before you even knew Him, before you even thought about Him, when you were running from Him, He was running toward you. He was pursuing you before you were born, before the world was even formed. So when you’re struggling to hold on to faith right here, just pause for a moment and remember that for eternity God has loved you. We’re just getting started.

Look back at all the people in history who have given their lives serving you. You say, “What does that mean?” Look at all the people in history who have given their lives up until now serving you. First Peter 1:10-12 that says:

Concerning this salvation, the prophets who prophesied about the grace that was to be yours searched and inquired carefully, inquiring what person or time the Spirit of Christ in them was indicating when he predicted the sufferings of Christ and the subsequent glories. It was revealed to them that they were serving not themselves but you, in the things that have now been announced to you through those who preached the good news to you by the Holy Spirit sent from heaven, things into which angels long to look.

Do you hear that? All the prophets in the Old Testament had a purpose and it was not to serve themselves. Instead, their purpose was to serve you. They were giving their lives, prophesying, enduring trials—to serve you and me. Think about Ezekiel. We’re reading through Ezekiel right now as a church and in our Bible reading today, Ezekiel’s wife, the delight of his eyes, died, but he was not even allowed to mourn. Who was he serving in that moment? He wasn’t serving himself. He was serving you. He was proclaiming God’s word centuries ago so that you and I today, right now, would know Who God is, how God responds to sinners and how God promises to save all who trust in Him. That’s what Ezekiel is saying in chapter after chapter after chapter right now in what we’re reading. He’s saying, “Trust in God’s Word.

Don't turn from God and His Word. Don't lose faith. Don't run after other gods. That leads to death every time. Don't do it." That's Ezekiel serving us right now through our Bible reading.

After him, it will be Daniel, then Hosea, Joel and Amos, and on and on and on, all of them saying, "Trust in God. Trust in God. Don't trust in any other gods; don't put your trust in yourself. Don't do it. You think you know what's best, but you don't know what's best. Trust in God." Let this soak in, Christian. All these prophets lived for your faith to help you hold fast in hard times. This was not just the prophets, but those who preached the good news to you. See all the people who've passed the gospel on so that now it's come to you.

Think about William Tyndale who risked his life in the 16th century to translate and publish the Bible into English so that commoners could read it. He eventually was condemned as a heretic, strangled and burned at the stake. Do you know why? Because he was serving you and me, and he gave his life so the Bible could be in our language and in our hands.

I think of other martyrs like him during Queen Mary's reign. There were 288 men, women and children burned at the stake because they believed and proclaimed the gospel, wanting it to be passed down to you and me. There are multitudes of these men and women throughout history, some of whose names we know, like Ezekiel, Daniel and Hosea. But there are multitudes more whose names we have no idea about. Each of them was filled with the Spirit of Christ; they walked through trials and gave their lives serving you and me so that we might experience salvation in Christ.

At the head of them all, look back at the King Who conquered sin and death for you. I put this red tape on the rope to remind us that our hope is not in some vague dream out there. Our hope is in a real historical event, a real historical Person. He lived a perfect life with no sin, died on a cross to pay the price for sinners, then rose from the grave in victory over sin and death. We have hope in the middle of trials here because we have put our hope in the King Who conquered the ultimate trial—death itself. This is what Peter is saying when he speaks in verse three of the *"living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead."*

I love verse eight: *"Though you have not seen him, you love him. Though you do not now see him, you believe in him and rejoice with joy..."* How is that possible? How is it possible to love and believe and rejoice in somebody you have not even seen face to face? Here's how that's possible. Christian brother and sister, you and I have seen Jesus in far greater ways than if we had seen Him face to face. First, most of the people who saw Him face to face rejected Him, so don't automatically think, "Yeah, if I was alive, I would have done this or that." Then secondly, very few people would have had an intimate, close-up look at Jesus. Most of us might have seen Him once or heard a sermon at some point. But look at what we have instead. We have it all. We see Him in every moment in the Gospels—calming the wind and the waves, healing this person over here, hearing every word He says. We see Him in intimate moments with His disciples. We see Him alone in the Garden praying, *"Father, not My will but Yours be done."* We see Him

dying on a cross. We see Him rising from the dead. Then we see Him ascending into heaven. We see His Spirit through all those He sends out.

By the way, we see Him now in the 39 Old Testament books, written over centuries, through promise after promise after promise of Who He is and how He would come to save us from our sins. We see Him better than we could have in the first century, for sure. As we see Him, we love Him, believe in Him and rejoice in Him—even in trials. Why? Because we know that we've put our hope in a King Who is alive. He's not dead. And we know that when we die, we will live because He said, "*I am the resurrection and the life. Whoever believes in me, though he die, yet shall he live*" forever with Me (John 11:25).

You can trust in Him in the middle of trials—why? Because God called you before time even began, because history is filled with people who have been serving you and exhorting you to trust Him in the middle of trials and at the head of it all is the King Who conquered sin and death, the ultimate trial, for you. And that's just one part.

Hold on to faith by looking forward.

Now, we look forward. Look back, look forward to two things. One, look forward to the inheritance that is guaranteed for you. Let's take a tour on this side of the rope. Here's the end of the mark showing when you die. This rope then starts going on forever and ever and ever in the other direction. So just imagine this rope goes on and on. Now we're a few million years in and it keeps going on and on and on and on, forever and ever.

What is the Bible saying about this? You have been "*...born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance...*" (1 Peter 1:3-4). The Bible describes our inheritance, this part of the rope, as a Kingdom, a new heaven, a new earth. It's physical. When you picture heaven, don't think you're just going to be floating around on clouds in some spirit world. That's not at all the way the Bible depicts heaven. It will be a new heaven and earth, a Kingdom where everything will be good. No more sorrow, no more sin, no more suffering, no more death, no more trials, no more temptation to lose faith.

It's an inheritance that is imperishable, meaning it will last forever. Have you ever experienced something that was so good, you think, "I just don't want this to end"? Heaven will be so good and will never, ever end.

It's also undefiled, with no trace or stain of sin or evil anywhere.

It's unfading. You know that feeling with that shiny new toy you get, then a week or month or year later, it just doesn't shine the same way it did. That's not the way heaven is. It's unfading, shining more and more and more as we go throughout history.

I wonder if at some point we will just pause, as we're enjoying our inheritance, and look back at that blue part of our life in this world. Maybe we'll look at each other and say, "Do you remember that world? It was so full of hurt, pain, heartache, suffering and evil. There were wars in that world. There was

starvation and diseases. There will millions of refugees driven from their homes in that world. You never knew if your home would last. They took children's lives from their mother's womb in that world. They trafficked children for horrible things in that world. People were always fighting against each other, accusing each other, attacking each other. There were protests and riots in the street."

Then we'll realize, "There are no wars here. There's no starvation. There's no disease. No one is attacking each other; everybody gets along with each other. There's not even anyone going after each other on social media. We're actually loving each other here. There are no protests, no riots. This world is awesome. All the things we struggled with in that world, we don't even need anymore. Even our bodies—remember when we had to wear masks everywhere? We couldn't even touch each other. Now our bodies are perfect. Remember how in that world, when you were 40, your back and knees started hurting for no reason? That doesn't happen here! No joint replacement needed. This is going to be awesome for a few trillion years!"

Just think about all the professions that will no longer be needed. No military. No police. No doctors or nurses. All these things we're so thankful for in this world won't be needed in a world where there's no sin and sorrow and pain. It will all be gone. This is what we're headed toward. This is the world God is calling us to. He promised, "This is your inheritance. It's coming."

So here's the deal. On that day when we're talking about all that, then we look back to this day, what's going to matter? What one thing is going to matter? Faith. Did we hold on to faith? It's not going to matter how long or short this little blue part was, how short or long your life was in this world. That's not what's going to matter. It's not going to matter how healthy or wealthy you were. The important question is did you have faith? Did you trust in God? Did you continue to hope and trust in God? That's the one thing that will matter.

So how do you hold on? You look forward to the inheritance that is guaranteed for you. It's guaranteed, knowing that there's a Kingdom coming for you. You can look forward to the glory that will be given to you. Did you hear this language in verses six and seven? *"In this you rejoice, though now for a little while, if necessary, you have been grieved by various trials, so that the tested genuineness of your faith—more precious than gold that perishes though it is tested by fire—may be found to result in praise and glory and honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ."*

There's some confusion and debate over who's getting the praise, glory and honor here. Is that for us or God? I think the picture is clear—it's both. The Bible is saying that faith is like gold refined in fire. When you and I go through trials, refining is taking place. The Bible talks about this all over the place. For example, in James 1:2-4 we read, *"Count it all joy, my brothers, when you meet trials of various kinds, for you know that the testing of your faith produces steadfastness. And let steadfastness have its full effect, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing."* There's a purpose in this. It's producing something.

Remember Romans 5:3-4? *"More than that, we rejoice in our sufferings."* We rejoice in sufferings—how? *"Knowing that suffering produces endurance."* It produces something worthwhile. *"And*

endurance produces character, and character produces hope.” So the whole picture is when our faith is tested, our faith is being refined like gold. Just like gold on the other side of the fire is more pure, precious and valuable, so is faith on the other side of the fire. It’s faith that has said, “God, even when my health was failing, even when my job was gone, even when this person I loved so much was gone, even when everything was dark around me, even more so then, I hoped and I trusted in You.” The Bible is saying that this kind of faith will be exalted by God in heaven.

You will stand before God, brother or sister, on that day and He will say, “Praise. glory and honor be to you. Here’s My Kingdom. Enjoy!” Then you will enjoy it to His praise, glory and honor. You will be glorified and God will be glorified.

Hold on to faith by looking up.

This all leads to the other place you look in the middle of trials. Christian, you look back, you look forward and you look up. First Peter 1 says, “Look up at the angels, who marvel at God’s plan of salvation for you.” Peter adds in verse 12 that these are “...*things into which angels long to look.*” What does that mean? Remember, angels don’t experience salvation like you and I do. Angels stand in awe as they watch sinners like you and me, who deserve eternal suffering, be saved from our sin and sustained by God in this sinful world. So look up at angels who peer over the precipice of heaven and watch God’s work in your life with wonder.

Look up at all the people in history who are cheering you on. They’re alive right now in heaven. Hebrews 12 says they are watching and cheering you and me on. Get the picture. In our suffering and trials, this host of men and women who have gone before us, all of whom experienced trials and temptations to lose faith and yet who held on to hope and trust in God—from Moses to Hannah to Elijah, to my dad and Heather’s mom, Betty Wright and Jake Castle—they’re all in heaven shouting right now, “Hold on! Just hold on! It’s worth it. He is worth it. God is worth your hope and trust. Just hold on!”

Look up at the angels, look up at the men and women who have gone before us, and ultimately look up at the God Who will guard and guide you all the way to the end. Verse five is the bedrock verse in this passage. There is an inheritance in heaven kept for you “...*who by God’s power are being guarded...*” That word means protected. Picture yourself on a dangerous journey, having guards around you to ensure you make it safely to the destination. Here you are on this long rope and the Bible says you have a guard to make sure you make it there.

In other words, on that day, when you see His face and receive your inheritance, maybe then you’ll think, “I held on.” Then on that day, you will realize, “Wait, God was actually holding on to me.” That’s the promise of 1 Peter 1:5. By His supernatural power, supernatural grace, supernatural strength, supernatural joy, God promises to hold on to you. So in the middle of trials and temptations to lose faith—small and big alike—brothers and sisters, look back, look forward and look up to the God Whose power promises to provide you everything you need. In this, have faith, continue in hope and trust in Him.

Will you bow your heads with me? Looking around this room and looking at that camera, I know there are some people who are not ready to stand before God on that day. If you do not have confidence when you think about standing before God because you have not put your hope and your trust in Jesus, I invite you right now to pray, “God, today I put my hope and my trust in You. Today I trust in what Jesus has done on the cross for me, in His resurrection for me, in all that You’ve done for me. Forgive me of my sin. Restore me into a relationship with You. Give me new life. Cause me to be born again. Save my soul. Save me from my sin.” When you pray that, God promises to answer that prayer. Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved (Romans 10:13).

God, bring about faith like that, we pray right now, in so many people’s hearts. Don’t let us play a religious game or chase the idols of this world. Help us trust in You. God, many people here are experiencing trials right now. Many of us don’t know the trial that’s coming around the corner, where we’re going to find ourselves at rock bottom. God, I pray for faith. I pray for continuing hope and trust in You in every heart and every life, now and in the days to come.

Guard Your people like You promised, by Your power and for the salvation that will be revealed in the last time. We praise You for our inheritance. We praise You for the hope into which we have been saved. All glory be to Your name, Jesus, for making this possible. We worship You. We praise You. And we say together today, “Our hope and our trust are in You.”

Though we have not seen You, we love You. We believe in You. We rejoice in You and we sure look forward to the day when we will see You, when our faith will turn to sight in a whole new way, when we will experience the reward You have prepared for us. Thank You, thank You, thank You for Your Word. Cause it to soak in more and more in our hearts, even as we contemplate what we’ve just heard. In Jesus’ name. Amen.

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